

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BRUSSELS 004143

SIPDIS

NOFORN

DEPT. FOR EUR/ERA, EUR/RPM, IO/UNP  
DEPT. ALSO FOR S/P - DAVID VAN CLEVE, AND NP/RA - MARK  
FITZPATRICK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/28/2013

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [FR](#) [IT](#) [PL](#) [UK](#) [DA](#) [GM](#) [SP](#) [NATO](#) [UNSC](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: FIRST STEPS TOWARD AN EU USE-OF-FORCE DOCTRINE:  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE U.S.

REF: A. BRUSSELS 3917

- [1](#)B. BRUSSELS 3210
- [1](#)C. BRUSSELS 2769
- [1](#)D. BRUSSELS 3263
- [1](#)E. ROME 3823

Classified By: USEU PolOff Van Reidhead; reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

-----  
Summary and Comment  
-----

[1](#)1. (C/NF) The draft European Security Strategy (ESS), which will be discussed at the September 5-6 informal "Gymnich" meeting of EU Foreign Ministers (ref. A), provides the U.S. with an early opportunity to engage on this emerging EU security doctrine. Born of the divisions over Iraq, the ESS is an attempt to frame the EU debate about how the EU should see security, in conscious if incomplete imitation of the U.S. National Security Strategy. An important element is the debate about when and under what conditions the EU might resort to the use of force. The ESS also invites discussion of the utility and effectiveness of multilateralism with regard to international security affairs. Logically, the discussion could require that EU leaders ask the question: How much linkage should there be between the UNSC and an EU use-of-force doctrine? In this respect, the ESS could challenge the EU to examine closely its devotion to multilateralism and the institutional status quo.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) Comment: This is the very early stage in a discussion that could play out over years. But even at this early moment there is value in engagement, with an emphasis on developing a shared strategic view. We recommend a quiet dialogue with our friends in the EU (i.e. in the Council Secretariat), the UK, Italy, Spain, Denmark and Poland. They

SIPDIS  
are closest to our views and can provide early warning of any move in a problematic direction. At this point, our interest should be avoiding a premature resolution of the ESS debate, because a near-term resolution would almost certainly favor a strong UNSC role in any EU use-of-force doctrine. End  
Comment. End Summary.

-----  
Pushing the Envelope  
-----

[1](#)3. (C/NF) The 15-page ESS (full text at ref. B; also available online at <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/03/st10/st10881en03.pdf>) defines the main threats to European security as terrorism, WMD proliferation, and failed states and organized crime. The ESS argues that as a global actor, the EU should share responsibility for global security, and should be ready and able to work with others, especially the U.S., to combat the new threats. Key to this readiness and ability is a credible use-of-force doctrine. Our interlocutors have told us that one purpose of the ESS is to push the EU toward a discussion of how far it is prepared to go in considerations of the use of force. The discussion will be controversial, because the draft implies the possibility of resorting to the use of force without full multilateral institutional support -- in other words, without recourse to the UNSC. (Note: See ref. D for more background on the ESS.)

-----  
First Steps  
-----

[1](#)4. (C/NF) As EU High Rep. Solana and numerous senior EU and member state interlocutors have made clear from the beginning of the drafting process, the ESS is just the first step in developing an EU consensus on the parameters of European security. It will represent a set of broad consensual assumptions and a flexible framework within which the EU can try to construct security policy. Our interlocutors tell us

the paper had to be "broad and soft" in order to accommodate the widely divergent views held by EU member states on how to deal with the threats defined in the paper. It also had to be detailed and comprehensive enough to lend it at least some credibility. But the EU's larger goal was to create a set of common principles to reduce the chances of another Iraq-like split, not to create an operational doctrine for security and defense. In that at least, the Council Secretariat believes it has succeeded.

-----  
An EU "Lesson Learned" from Transatlantic  
Differences Over Iraq  
-----

15. (C/NF) Interlocutors acknowledge that the effort to produce a security strategy was sparked by the desire to avoid a repetition of the corrosive internal divisions the EU experienced over the use of force in Iraq. During the Iraq crisis, the EU was torn apart, and marginalized itself. The crisis was viewed as a debacle for the EU's fledgling Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The pain -- and humiliation -- of the EU's marginalization was felt keenly in both Brussels and capitals. The U.S.-EU relationship suffered as member states fought out their Iraq differences in public. The current flurry of CFSP integration efforts is the logical solution from an EU perspective. These efforts, among which the ESS stands as a sort of guiding directive, will continue as the EU seeks the ability to act with consequence when faced with international crises.

-----  
But is it Credible?  
-----

16. (C/NF) But doing something about the new security threats requires at some level consideration of the use of force. The ESS posits the need for exactly that. If the EU is to become the international force envisioned by the ESS, then it must be able to legitimately use military force. This is a difficult concept for many member states who strongly prefer that the EU focus instead on issues such as "addressing the root causes of conflict" and shoring up existing international organizations and regimes. These are easier for the EU to respond to because they rely heavily on civilian instruments and "soft" power, and appeal above all to Europe's sense of magnanimity, inclusive universalism, and the importance of multilateralism. For many, the "hard" power issue of legitimate military force cuts close to the sovereign bone.

17. (C/NF) Moreover, considerations of the use of force suggest the controversial possibility of the EU becoming a security organization. In response to our query about that possibility, Council Director-General and principal ESS drafter Robert Cooper asserted that yes, the EU will become a security organization in time. He argued that that eventuality had been evident since the 1998 Franco-British declaration at Saint Malo (the bargain whereby France agreed to filter European security through NATO while the UK agreed to support an EU security identity). But even Cooper acknowledges that giving EU security policy "teeth" through the development of a common EU policy on the use of force will not be easy.

-----  
Toward a Use of Force Doctrine?  
-----

18. (C/NF) As ESS discussions move forward the EU will inevitably be forced to address a number of difficult questions, with important implications for transatlantic relations: How far is the EU prepared to go in articulating a use-of-force doctrine? Will EU leaders adopt a flexible doctrine that leaves options on the table and promises force credibility? Or will they define legitimate use of force in such a way as to constrain or limit the EU's participation except in very narrow circumstances? How strictly will the EU separate humanitarian and military assets when responding to complex humanitarian emergencies (ref. C)? Will members want to spend more time defining when force cannot be used than in defining a policy that addresses the core issues -- i.e. how to deal with countries that do not play by the rules? Specifically, will EU leaders require recourse to the UNSC? Or will they perhaps be willing to take multilateral cover under a broader, more flexible body of international law? The answers to these questions will be of critical importance to U.S. interests, and will determine both the extent and pace of EU evolution as a security organization -- a development with important implications for NATO.

-----  
Next Steps  
-----

19. (C/NF) Robert Cooper tells us that the EU has taken the

use of force question as far as it can for now, and will devote its near-term efforts to further defining the strategy's less controversial aspects. Toward that end, the EU is planning to discuss the ESS at different venues throughout the fall. Between the informal Gymnich ministerial on September 5-6 (where the discussion will be limited mostly to reaching agreement on the path ahead) and the December EU Summit (where a revised strategy will be presented to leaders), the EU will convene three small ESS workshops. The first of these will take place September 17 in Rome, under the aegis of the Aspen Institute. The workshops are intended to further the ESS discussion by bringing together representatives from all 25 current and future EU member states, plus think tank and academia experts (ref. E). (Note: Cooper tells us that U.S. academics and think tanks would be welcome to attend the workshops if their expertise were relevant.) ESS discussions will also take place at the PSC and COREPER levels during the run-up to the December Summit. Cooper anticipates completing the new ESS draft by mid-November.

-----  
Comment: Opportunities for the U.S.  
-----

10. (C/NF) Beyond the "First Pillar" issues of economic and social affairs, the EU has not yet reached a stable consensus on what it is and how sovereignty will be shared among Brussels and national capitals. This creates both frustration and opportunity: frustration because understanding and predicting EU behavior is very difficult, but an opportunity because this open-ended state of affairs invites dialogue. We cannot yet tell how member states will line up on the issue of using force, and we don't see the debate ending anytime soon. But we see three groups lining up for the long march ahead: First, there will be member states who balk at the notion of using force under any circumstances. These relatively few states -- among whom Germany may be emerging as a leader -- will have to be either accommodated or circumvented. Second will be the larger group who are not opposed to the use of force per se, but who will only want to consider it in the context of a UNSC resolution. Finally, there are countries such as the UK -- and perhaps France -- which have already shown a willingness to bypass the UNSC when it is in their interest to do so. If the EU is to develop a positive security identity these countries should be engaged to ensure that they protect the EU's right to act independently of the UNSC.

11. (C/NF) In the case of France, however, we fear that engaging too soon and too directly could be counterproductive. The current French administration may feel compelled to support a strong UNSC role in European security policy, even if it contradicts certain French interests, in an attempt to constrain U.S. power and influence. Emboldened by its own recent rhetoric about the need to check American power, France might be willing to constrain itself, through an EU strategic link with the UNSC, in order to constrain the U.S. Any such linkage would limit the ability of our European allies within the EU to act in concert with us. For now, we should let others -- notably the UK -- engage France on the need to protect member state and EU autonomy with regard to the UNSC.

12. (C/NF) In this context, we believe U.S. interests lie in supporting those member states and institutional elements who favor legitimating force under a broader body of international law, and under new forms of multilateral initiatives. Now is the time to quietly engage our friends in the EU on our views of the ESS and any potential for an EU use-of-force doctrine. The UK, Italy (which holds the EU Presidency), the Council Secretariat, Denmark, Spain and Poland are all good access points. All are sympathetic to U.S. views and are able to influence the debate, some considerably. Our goal should be to prevent any premature resolution of the ESS and use of force debates. The political climate in Europe is such that any near-term resolution would come down in favor of a stronger UNSC role in international security. Therefore, our goal should be to ensure that the debate continues. And we should take advantage of the process to discuss our views of the ESS and the potential for an EU use-of-force doctrine during upcoming UN and security consultations. We might also use the topic as a thread that we can weave through relevant regional troika consultations. Our interlocutors, including Robert Cooper, have said on numerous occasions that the EU would welcome such dialogue -- "anytime, anywhere," as Cooper put it. We should accept the offer. End Comment.